

Cathy Bissoon, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania?

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 82, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 166 Ex.]

YEAS—82

Akaka	Feinstein	Mikulski
Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Baucus	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Hoeven	Portman
Bingaman	Hutchinson	Pryor
Blumenthal	Inouye	Reed
Boozman	Johanns	Reid
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Roberts
Brown (MA)	Johnson (WI)	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Kerry	Sanders
Cardin	Kirk	Schumer
Carper	Kohl	Sessions
Casey	Kyl	Shaheen
Chambliss	Landrieu	Shelby
Coats	Lautenberg	Snowe
Coburn	Leahy	Stabenow
Cochran	Lee	Tester
Collins	Levin	Thune
Conrad	Lieberman	Toomey
Coons	Lugar	Udall (CO)
Corker	Manchin	Vitter
Cornyn	McCain	Warner
Crapo	McConnell	Whitehouse
Durbin	Menendez	
Enzi	Merkley	

NAYS—3

Blunt	Inhofe	Paul
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NOT VOTING—15

Burr	Heller	Rubio
Cantwell	Isakson	Udall (NM)
DeMint	Klobuchar	Webb
Graham	McCaskill	Wicker
Hatch	Risch	Wyden

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

AGRICULTURE RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2012—Continued

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. I thank the Chair. Shortly, along with the Senator from Colorado, I am going to discuss an amendment to the Agriculture appropriations bill we have offered. But, first, I am going to yield to the Senator from Texas for the purpose of his offering an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

AMENDMENT NO. 775 TO AMENDMENT NO. 738

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Senator from Maine. I have an amendment at the desk. I ask that it be called up and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mr. CORNYN] proposes an amendment numbered 775 to amendment No. 738.

Mr. CORNYN. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit funding for Operation Fast and Furious or similar "gun walking" programs)

After section 217 of title II of division B, insert the following:

SEC. 218. No funds made available under this Act shall be used to allow the transfer of firearms to agents of drug cartels where law enforcement personnel of the United States do not continuously monitor and control such firearms at all times.

Mr. CORNYN. I will be back to talk to the substance of my amendment.

I yield the floor, and I thank the Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise this evening to discuss an amendment numbered 757 that I have offered with my colleague from Colorado, Senator MARK UDALL, that would protect the flexibility of schools to serve healthy vegetables in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. This is a bipartisan amendment that we are offering. It is cosponsored by Senators CRAPO, RISCH, SNOWE, AYOTTE, WYDEN, JOHANNES, NELSON of Nebraska, MIKULSKI, and HOVEN.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed a rule that would limit servings of a certain category of vegetables that includes white potatoes, corn, peas, and lima beans. It would limit them to a total of one cup per week in the National School Lunch Program.

The proposed rule would also ban this category of vegetables altogether from

the School Breakfast Program. Our bipartisan amendment would prevent the Department of Agriculture from moving forward with this arbitrary limitation. I am concerned the proposed rule would impose significant cuts on schools and would limit the flexibility they need to serve nutritious, affordable meals to their students.

For those who are less familiar with this issue, let me give my colleagues some background. Current law already requires the School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs to follow the most recent dietary guidelines for Americans. Last year, the USDA released the newest dietary guidelines that call for all Americans of all ages to eat more vegetables.

The 2010 dietary guidelines list four nutrients of concern. They are potassium, dietary fiber, calcium, and vitamin D. The guidelines state that dietary intake of these four nutrients are low enough to be of public health concern for both adults and children.

Since USDA is concerned about a lack of these nutrients in the American diet, it would make sense for the Department to promote good sources of these critical nutrients. Yet the USDA's proposed rule would actually limit vegetables that are good sources of these nutrients. USDA should not limit their availability but instead should encourage their healthy preparation.

For example, here are some nutritional facts about potatoes that are often overlooked. Potatoes have more potassium than bananas, a food commonly associated with this nutrient. Potatoes are cholesterol free, low in fat and sodium, and can be served in countless healthy ways. In fact, a medium baked potato contains 15 percent of the daily recommended value of fiber—that is one of those nutrients of concern—27 percent of the daily recommended value for vitamin B6, 28 percent of the daily recommended amount of vitamin C. This is a great nutritional bargain at about a nickel per serving.

I am going to go on and discuss the rest of the problems with this rule and the solution, but I know my colleague from Colorado is under a time constraint. So at this point I am going to yield to him, my partner in this endeavor, for his statement. Then I will reclaim the floor and continue with my discussion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN.) The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I thank the Senator from Maine for her graciousness and for her leadership on this important amendment that she and I brought to the floor. Clearly, the 2012 Agriculture appropriations bill that will direct the USDA to provide adequate flexibility to schools to deliver students nutritious school meals while effectively managing costs is very important. But we have to do it in the right way. I want to share my thinking on what the right way is.

In January of this year the USDA issued a proposed rule for nutritional standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs that would limit total servings of certain vegetables—most notably potatoes, corn, green peas, and lima beans—to one cup per week and eliminate potatoes from school breakfasts.

I have heard from school lunch providers in Colorado that this restriction will result in significant challenges for food service operations through increased costs, reduced flexibility, and decreased school meal participation. This is especially concerning for them in my State, and I think as the Senator from Maine has pointed out, all over our country because school districts are facing increasingly tight budgets.

Many children from Colorado and across the Nation depend on school meal programs to keep them nourished and ready to learn. That is why it is important for school meals to include healthy food options while also allowing sufficient flexibility to school meal providers to help build a foundation for healthy eating going forward.

In order to achieve this goal, a very worthy goal, it is important that we implement the bipartisan child nutrition reauthorization the Congress passed last year. In order to ensure that implementation is successful for both kids and schools, it is important the USDA takes into consideration the insights and the experiences of those who are in the school cafeterias every day across America serving meals to our children. These are well-trained and qualified individuals who see our children, our students, on a daily basis. They know their parents, and they very well may be parents of students themselves.

Here is what they are saying. I will read to you from a letter the Colorado School Nutrition Association sent me recently regarding this proposed rule:

We believe it is a realistic and attainable goal to create meal plans that meet the current dietary guidelines for Americans while allowing schools the flexibility to manage cost and maintain student participation. Improved nutrition is a vital aspect of our nation's health, one which we heartily support, and we believe it can be accomplished without significant damage to the programs we are trying to improve and without additional strain on local schools.

That is what the Collins-Udall amendment intends to do. It would direct the USDA to not set maximum limits on the frequency that schools can serve any one fruit or vegetable while allowing schools to continue to moderate portion size appropriately. Our amendment will also ensure that schools have the flexibility to serve healthy fruits and vegetables in a manner consistent with guidelines established jointly by the USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services, called the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Some wonder why Senator COLLINS and I have taken such issue with this proposed rule. Yes, we both do come

from potato-producing States. We both believe potatoes have gotten a bad rap. The truth is, when prepared properly, the potato can provide critical nutrients to students that will help them lead healthy lives and be ready to learn in the classrooms.

In some areas, increased flexibility to serve this nutritious and available vegetable can actually help schools manage costs so they can afford to purchase other more expensive vegetables. Where I believe school meal providers, potato producers, and health advocates can agree is that this issue is less about any one vegetable and more about the preparation of the vegetable. Anything can be fried or drowned in any number of fats available to us as consumers. Let's be honest.

Even Agriculture Secretary Vilsack agreed in testimony before the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Committee that it is not the potato, it is the way in which potatoes are being prepared and provided. We should be encouraging schools to prepare potatoes and other fruits and vegetables appropriately, not limiting their flexibility and potentially increasing their cost unnecessarily.

I have spent a good portion of my time in Congress working to promote physical activity, getting children and families into the great outdoors and reducing the amount of time children spend in front of the TV and video games. Through my Healthy Kids From Day One Act and the National Kids to Parks Initiative I have focused on getting kids to eat healthier and become more active.

Another way we promote healthy lifestyles is making sure kids have access to needed nutrients and balanced meals. That is why Congress directed the USDA to ensure that all fruits and vegetables are part of Federal food nutrition programs, particularly the school meal programs.

I believe, and I know Senator COLLINS believes, there is a balance we can find, a balance that preserves needed flexibility for our cash-strapped schools but also preserves guidelines that will ensure our kids are getting the best nutrients possible in their school meals, including from the potato.

So instead of pointing fingers, we need to provide commonsense solutions that help school kids and their parents make wise choices that in turn will make a healthier America.

A healthy country is a strong country. I believe this amendment is an important tool to ensure that our schools can be an active and effective participant in ensuring our children are healthy, well cared for, and ready to become the next leaders in our goal of winning the global economic race.

I thank the Senator from Maine for yielding time to me. I look forward to working with her, to reaching a successful conclusion, and to our amendment being agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Colorado for his excellent remarks. Both of us share the goal that all Americans share for our children—making sure they get a healthy diet. For many children, it is so critical that the School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs provide that diet.

Unfortunately, in many ways USDA's rule does not comply with the dietary guidelines which recognize that Americans of all ages tend to be short on two particular nutrients, potassium and fiber, and potatoes are abundant in providing those.

When we think of potassium, most of us think of bananas. In fact, as this chart shows, a potato actually has far more potassium than a banana. Indeed, ironically, the Dietary Guidelines for all Americans includes an appendix exclusively listing foods that are rich in potassium. A baked potato is the first vegetable listed because it is such an excellent source of potassium.

Potatoes can also serve as vehicles for other vegetables. I recently discussed this issue with the director of school nutrition for two communities in Maine, York and Kittery. Her name is Doris Demers. She told me the kids in her school system rave about the baked potato bar, where they can load baked potatoes with broccoli, shaved carrots, chives, salsa, vegetarian chili, beans, and many other healthful items. Doris also pointed out to me that this is a particularly popular option for students who are vegetarians, and they are seeing an increasing number of students who are vegetarians in their school system.

Yet if this rule were to go into effect, a school serving a medium baked potato on Monday would be prevented from serving a full portion of potatoes or corn at any other lunch during that week. Think how absurd that result is. These two vegetables—corn and potatoes—are central to a variety of dishes, such as soups, stews, chowders, and Shepherd's pie.

One food service director told me of her school's attempt to get children to eat fresh whole foods rather than heavily processed foods. Thus, she developed a farm to school program in cooperation with a local farmer.

The students went out into the field, picked the corn, husked it themselves, and were served the corn for lunch, enjoying the experience of consuming wholesome, locally grown food. Yet, as she pointed out to me, the USDA's proposed rule would prevent her from serving an ear of fresh corn one day of the week and a baked potato another day of the same week. That is an utterly absurd result. That is why people get so frustrated with some of the regulations that come out of Washington.

I am also very concerned about the impact on the School Breakfast Program. It is a voluntary program, unlike the School Lunch Program. Some school districts could be forced to drop out of the School Breakfast Program

as a direct result of this rule because it could increase costs by up to 50 cents per breakfast. If we start multiplying that across all the breakfasts served by these school systems, we are soon talking about real money. This would be a disaster if schools chose to terminate their participation in the School Breakfast Program for those students who rely on this program. Only Washington could impose a rule that purports to improve school nutrition but actually causes schools to drop out of the very program that is supposed to provide that nutrition.

In fact, many of our colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus in the House have written to Secretary Vilsack expressing “concerns regarding the new costs the proposed rule would impose on schools educating the highest percentage of low-income students.” The letter goes on to note:

For many low-income children, the best, if not all, of their nutrition comes from programs (the USDA) administers.

The letter points out that many schools simply “do not have the resources that may be diverted to meet such large cost increases.”

Research has shown us time and again that eating a healthy breakfast is critical to academic success. Eating breakfast also provides significant health benefits, as we all know. Not eating breakfast is associated with excess body weight, especially among children and adolescents, and consuming breakfast has been associated with weight loss and improved nutrition.

I hope USDA will listen to the concerns voiced by the professionals who manage these programs. The School Nutrition Association opposes this restriction and “believes that consumption of an array of fruits and vegetables should be encouraged,” not limited.

The following organizations are opposing the USDA’s proposed rule because it would increase costs and limit their flexibility: the American Association of School Administrators, the National School Boards Association, the Council of Great City Schools, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

In my State, the Maine Department of Education, the Maine PTA, the Maine School Management Association, and the Maine Principals Association have all expressed their support for our amendment and their opposition to the USDA’s ill-conceived rule. These groups represent school administrators, superintendents, school boards, and principals. They know; they oversee the school food service programs, and they understand the difficulties and costs this rule would cause. The American Association of School Administrators, for example, wrote to express support for our amendment saying:

The overly prescriptive nature of the requirements for providing fruits and vegetables increases the cost of meals so dras-

tically that school districts implementing the changes, even receiving the higher reimbursement rate, would still be covered for less than half of the incurred expenses.

The fact is, the proposed rule would impose significant and needless costs on our Nation’s school districts at a time when they can least afford it.

Listen to what the cost of this rule is estimated to be by the Department of Agriculture: The USDA estimates that this rule could cost as much as \$6.8 billion over the next 5 years. The lion’s share of that cost is going to fall on State and local agencies.

The costs associated with the proposed rule would also affect working families who rely on the school meal programs. As the National Association of Elementary School Principals wrote me:

USDA’s proposed nutritional guidelines will force schools to raise paid meal prices.

I ask unanimous consent that a list of organizations in support be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I hope our colleagues will take a closer look at this bipartisan amendment that Senator UDALL and I are offering, with the support of many colleagues. We need to ensure that our schools can maintain the flexibility they need to serve healthy meals at an affordable cost.

EXHIBIT 1

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

NATIONAL SCHOOL GROUPS

American Association of School Administrators (AASA): Represents approximately 13,000 educational leaders including superintendents, as well as school chief executive officers and other senior level Administrators and cabinet members.

National School Boards Association (NSBA): Represent public school boards and related school boards associations.

Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS): Represents the needs of urban schools and inner-city students. Membership includes school districts located in cities with populations over 250,000 or student enrollment over 35,000. Therefore, CGCS indirectly represents 6.8 million children, 65 percent of which are eligible for free/reduced price lunch.

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP): Represents approximately 23,000 elementary and middle school principals. NAESP indirectly represents approximately 33 million children in grades pre-kindergarten through grade eight.

National Rural Education Association (NREA)/National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition (NREAC): These umbrella groups represent the rural voice of America’s educators. Members are comprised of state and national organizations, as well as individuals, who are concerned about rural education.

Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs): Represents approximately 550 regional service agencies (public multi-service agency that provides support services and programs for schools). They work with schools that represent 80 percent of all public school students in the nation, and are authorized by state statute (none in Maine).

MAINE SCHOOL GROUPS

Maine Parent Teacher Association (Maine PTA): Represents approximately 100 local PTA units and 3,500 members in Maine; membership is comprised of parents, educators, students and school advocates.

Maine School Management Association (MSMA): This umbrella organization represents the school boards (MSBA) and superintendents (MSSA) in Maine. Maine Principals Association (MPA): Represents approximately 900 members in Maine, including elementary and secondary principals, assistant principals, and other school administrators.

State of Maine Department of Education
Maine School Nutrition Association

FARM/FOOD GROUPS

National Potato Council
Maine Potato Board
American Frozen Foods Institute

OTHER GROUPS

Letter from several Members of the Congressional Black Caucus

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleagues Senator COLLINS and Senator UDALL to raise the concern of nutrition guidelines in our schools. This amendment aims to clarify school nutrition standards to ensure that they appropriately reflect the USDA’s Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

As you may know, on January 31, 2011, U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius announced the release of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the Federal Government’s evidence-based nutritional guidance to promote health, reduce the risk of chronic diseases, and reduce the prevalence of obesity through improved nutrition and physical activity. However, just 2 weeks prior, on January 13, 2011, USDA released a proposed rule to improve nutrition requirements for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program to align them with the 2005 “Dietary Guidelines for Americans.”

This was bureaucratic confusion exemplified. Why not delay the proposed rule for our Federal meal programs by 2 weeks and instead release it to reflect the most recent nutrition guidelines that were issued on January 31? While I understand and agree with the necessity and desire to update the nutrition standards in schools, wouldn’t it be more effective to utilize the most recent, science-based guidelines to reflect those recommendations?

In my home State of Maine, like most in the Nation, we find ourselves struggling with an obesity epidemic. According to the Centers for Disease Control, today in the United States, 64 percent of adults and 28 percent of high school students are either overweight or obese. Equally, if not more disturbing, are the statistics revealing that only 23 percent of adults and 21 percent of high school students eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

With more than 31 million children currently participating in the National

School Lunch Program and more than 11 million participating in the National School Breakfast Program, I believe that good nutrition within our Nation's schools is more important than ever. And that is all the more pressing, given that many children consume at least half of their daily calories at school, and for many students participating in these programs, the food served at school may be the only food they regularly eat.

For that, and many other reasons, I stand here today in support of Senate amendment No. 757. Specifically, the amendment would ensure that Federal school meal programs will be permitted to provide fruits and vegetables consistent with the most recent dietary guidelines.

Specifically, the recently proposed rule to improve nutrition requirements for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program would limit the total servings of starchy vegetables, including the white potato, to one cup per week and completely eliminate those vegetables from school breakfasts. I am particularly disturbed by this recommendation because they actually contradict the recently published 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, as well as the 2005 Dietary Guidelines they are supposed to reflect.

Our most recent national Dietary Guidelines—those released this past January—simply state that “intake by Americans of some nutrients is low enough to be of public health concern. They are potassium, dietary fiber, calcium, and vitamin D.” As you may know, there are few fruits or vegetables that contain the levels of potassium in potatoes. In fact, a medium potato—5.3 oz with the skin—is not only a good source of potassium, but also contains significantly more potassium—200 mg more—than its nearest rival, the banana.

Additionally, one serving of potato has as much fiber as broccoli and provides 13 percent of the daily recommended value. In an attempt to combat these deficiencies the 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommend that all Americans, including school age children, consume 5 cups of starchy vegetables a week. This is an increase in recommended consumption from the recommendations of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for 3 cups of starchy vegetables per week. And yet the proposed rule would limit the total number of servings of starchy vegetables to one cup per week in our school lunch program, which is entirely inconsistent with the 2005 and 2010 Dietary Guideline recommendations.

I believe that it is clear that potatoes are a nutrient powerhouse, and the fact that the white potato offers 13 percent of a child's daily potassium requirements for less than 5 cents per serving provides further support for keeping potatoes in school meals, especially during challenging budgetary times.

The Federal Government should allow our struggling schools to make fiscally responsible choices that offer the most nutritional return on investment. In fact, USDA has estimated that the proposed meal plan will increase school lunch costs by \$6.8 billion over 5 years, and it cannot be denied that a significant part of this increase is due to the limit on potatoes. Limiting starchy vegetables to 1 cup per week will increase costs by approximately 5.6 percent with possible adverse affects on nutritional quality.

It has been well documented that, currently, nine out of ten Americans are not achieving vegetable and fruit consumption recommendations. I am disappointed that during such a time, that the USDA would propose rules denying our nation's youth access to nutrient-rich foods as part of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs.

And let me just say before the issue is raised that no one is arguing in favor of a diet based on french fries. The truth is—to combat the wave of obesity and promote more healthy food choices we must promote food items that present a diverse set of vitamins and minerals. No matter how they are prepared, potatoes are currently included in healthy school meal plans to meet national dietary guidelines. Yet many Americans seem to believe all potatoes served in schools are in the form of deep fried french fries.

This may have been the case at one time, but today, according to our own school food service administrators, most potatoes served in schools are baked, not fried. Like 80 percent of schools nationwide, the deep fryers in York and Kittery, ME schools, for example, were removed years ago. As the school nutrition director of those schools, Ms. Doris Demers informed me recently that, in her 18 years working in school nutrition, she has never seen fryers in a Maine school nutrition program. When prepared properly, the potato is packed with nutrition and is a cost-effective option for the school lunch and breakfast programs.

While I will continue to endeavor with my colleagues to support improved nutritional standards for all Americans, I am concerned that many throughout our nation cannot help but get confused about which guideline they should try to follow. For these reasons, I respectfully request that my colleagues join me in encouraging USDA to be consistent on their nutritional advice to the American public—of all ages.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

AMENDMENT NO. 772 TO AMENDMENT NO. 738

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator MURRAY, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up amendment No. 772.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN], for Mrs. MURRAY, proposes an amendment numbered 772 to amendment No. 738.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strike a section providing for certain exemptions from environmental requirements for the reconstruction of highway facilities damaged by natural disasters or emergencies)

Strike section 128 of division C.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Illinois for letting me take care of this matter, which I hope will be disposed of quickly.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SSI EXTENSION FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED REFUGEES ACT OF 2011

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1721, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1721) to amend section 402 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to extend the eligibility period for supplemental security income benefits for refugees, asylees, and certain other humanitarian immigrants, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time, that a budgetary pay-go statement be printed, and that the Senate proceed to a vote on passage of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, this is the Statement of Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation for S. 1721.

Total Budgetary Effects of S. 1721 for the 5-year Statutory PAYGO Scorecard: net decrease in the deficit of \$24 million.

Total Budgetary Effects of S. 1721 for the 10-year Statutory PAYGO Scorecard: net decrease in the deficit of \$24 million.

Also submitted for the RECORD as part of this statement is a table prepared by the Congressional Budget Office, which provides additional information on the budgetary effects of this act.

The information follows.